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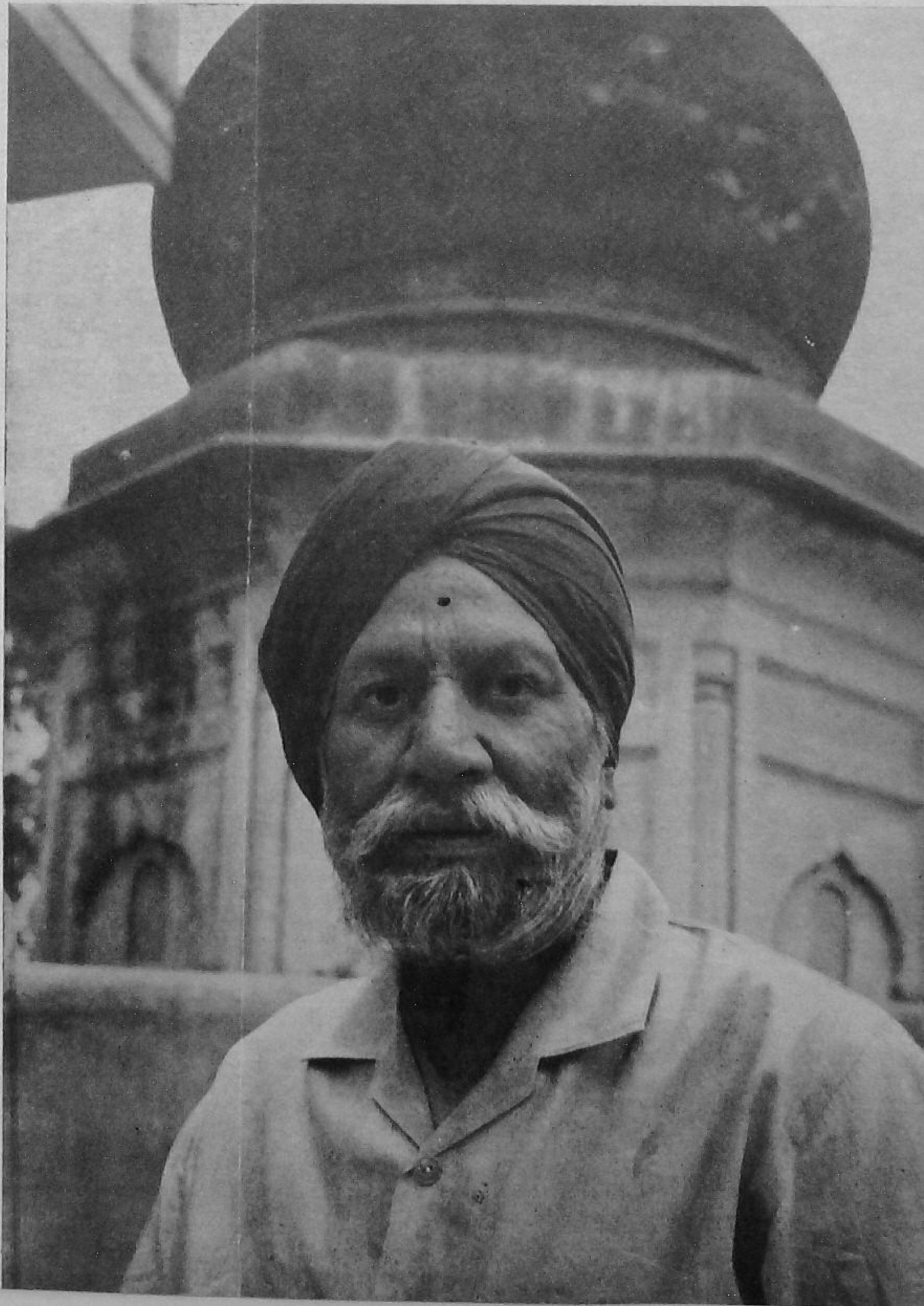
Panchayati Raj

22 JUL 1963
T. KALLUPATTI

JULY 1963



Captain Sant Singh, Sarpanch, Gharuwan Panchayat of Bassi Pathanan Block in Punjab. An interesting account of his achievements and his difficulties based on an interview with him appears inside in an article entitled "An Attorney at the Village Doorstep".

HEADACHES OF A SARPANCH

Captain Sant Singh, Sarpanch, Gharuwan Panchayat, discussing village problems with other panches.

THE UNFINISHED FIELD CHANNEL : *A number of field channels could not be dug because the land owners would not permit them to be extended beyond their fields. The tube-well in the background, therefore, could not be utilised to its maximum capacity.*

THE LIQUOR SHOP : *The Panchayat has only partially succeeded in shifting it from inside the village. It is now located on the verge of the village tank and is the first object to greet a visitor to the village.*

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ASADHA-1885

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EDITOR : VISHNU DUTT

(*Asstt. Editor, Publications Division*)

BUSINESS NOTICE

Single Copy : 15 nP.

Annual : Rs. 1·25

All enquiries regarding agencies and rates of subscription and advertisements may be addressed to the Publications Division, Old Secretariat, Delhi-6. Editcrial correspondence may be addressed to the Editor, *Panchayati Raj*, Ministry of Community Development & Cooperation, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi.

LETTERS

A CONFERENCE OF NUMBERS?

Sir,

IN ORISSA, a Conference is held annually at each District Headquarter in order to take stock of the progress of various development schemes and to tackle the difficulties, if any. The Conference presided over by the Development Commissioner is attended by all the Divisional Officers, and Block Development Officers. For some time past, even the Extension Officers are also asked to attend the Conference. The Block is deserted of all officials for two or three days and the development work comes to a dead stop during this period. Is it necessary that the Extension Officers should also attend when the Block Development Officers and the District Officials who know as much about the field conditions, are already there? It would save lot of Travelling Allowance and an avoidable set-back to development work during the present emergency if the Extension Officers are exempted from attending the Conference. For surely, the effectiveness of a Conference is judged not by the number of persons who attend it but by the quality of work done by it.

15-5-63,
Kolnora,
ORISSA.

Yours etc.,
RADHEY SHYAM TEWARI

GRAM SEVAKS' TRAINING CENTRES

Sir,

FROM MY personal experience of training as a V.L.W., Study Tours of other Training Centres and mutual exchange of ideas with other colleagues, I venture to suggest that the training being imparted by the Gram Sevaks' Training Centres is defective and falls short of the requirements on the field. In spite of the much publicised fact that the training is programme-oriented, it is not as practical as it should be. No doubt, the training syllabus does indicate that substantial part of the trainees' time is spent on the field or in the village. But no genuine interest is taken by the instructors in these practicals. They generally do not care to explain the proper technology or to illustrate practical work by sound tips. More often than not, the trainees are left to themselves to do the practicals. Whereas this gives some leisure to the Instructors, the trainees feel so bored with doing physical labour that they develop aversion for the practicals.

The curriculum lacks woefully in practical programmes relating to village industries and rural engineering. No effort is made to give a military bias to the training by including subjects such as marching, rifle-shooting, first-aid, air-raid precautions etc. This deprives the trainees of an opportunity to imbibe not only a sense of duty and discipline, but also the competence to serve as useful citizens in times of emergency like the present one. If they were given some military training, they would feel more at home with organisations like the P.R.D. or the Home Guard now being set up all over the country. The work of Village Volunteer Force could also be considerably speeded up by them.

Some of the outstanding V.L.W.s if called at the Training Centre could prove a helping hand in bringing about the above referred improvements in the Training Programme.

19-5-63
Kheri,
Uttar Pradesh.

Yours etc.,
G. R. S. RAO

An Attorney at the Village Doorstep

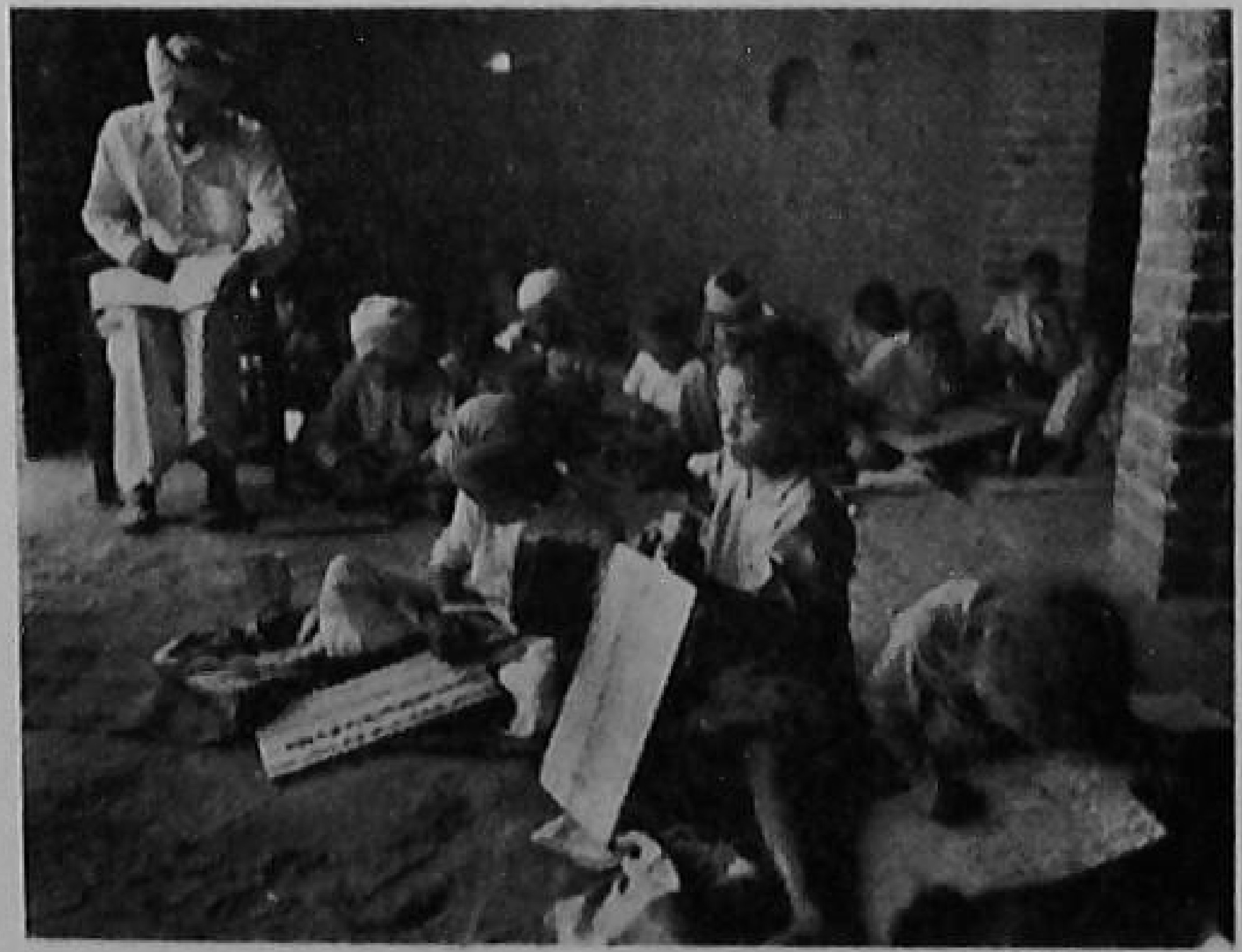
VISHNU DUTT

The sanitary well with raised parapet walls. On the top is a beautiful metallic peacock

RURAL PEOPLE need a wise and powerful attorney to help them stand on their feet, not only in the Krishi Bhavan at the Centre, or at the State capitals but also in their own village to whom they can turn for day-to-day advice and protection from the vested interests. The tribe of vested interests in the form of the feudal landlord, the greedy money-lender and the unscrupulous Government servant have all swelled their ranks. The wiser and more experienced the Sarpanch, the better it is for the villagers. However, the pity is that usually the educated and enlightened people turn their back on the villages and settle in cities in search of better prospects and facilities. But whenever educated, experienced and good-natured people have decided to assume the village leadership, the struggle for the community's welfare has been waged heroically and though success might have eluded them for some time, it has nonetheless, been theirs finally. Panchayati Raj has proved this time and again in more than one village.

Village Garhuwan, a fairly big village of about 2,000 population in Bassi Pathanan Block in the Punjab has found in their Sarpanch S. Sant Singh such an attorney at their doorstep who is waging on their behalf a relentless battle for their progress and prosperity. He is a retired Captain from the Army where he served for more than 30 years in the educational line. He joined the Army as a sepoy and rose to the high rank of a Captain sheerly by dint of hard work and devotion to duty. He got all his education in the Army itself and passed the Army Special Examination with flying colours. In 1945, during the World War II, he worked as Instructor Release Period Education in Syria and Palestine and oriented our soldiers in farming, gardening and running of co-operatives with a view to facilitate their ultimate rehabilitation after being released from the Army. It is this past experience of his which is now standing him in good stead as a Sarpanch engaged in the welfare of his fellow villagers. I asked him, "How do you find your new job as a Sarpanch, as distinct from your role in the Army as Education Officer ?" Prompt came the reply, "No difference at all. Both are alike in nature. I am essentially a teacher. A Sarpanch is nothing but a practical educator of his fellow villagers. He persuades them to new and better ways of life through discussion and practical demonstration." Our conversation led me to ask him the question how it was that after

From Primary School



retirement from the Army he had chosen to live and work in the village rather than settle in a city, as most people usually do. He replied, "In the beginning, I had decided to settle in Chandigarh where I stayed for about a year. But soon I found the life there so boring that I decided to shift to my home village." His reply rather surprised me and so interrupting him, I asked, "What, the beautiful city of Chandigarh did not hold any attraction for you." "Yes", he asserted with some warmth and added, "It is not the huge buildings or the wide roads that matter. It is the man living there. And in Chandigarh, I noticed people were so self-centred and busy in their own affairs that they cared a jot for their neighbours. Mostly the people who live there are either office-goers or businessmen who run their shops. I found that I had little in common with them and so life there appeared to be dull and boring. Truly speaking, I felt lonely even in the crowded streets of Chandigarh."

"Are you satisfied now in the village ?"

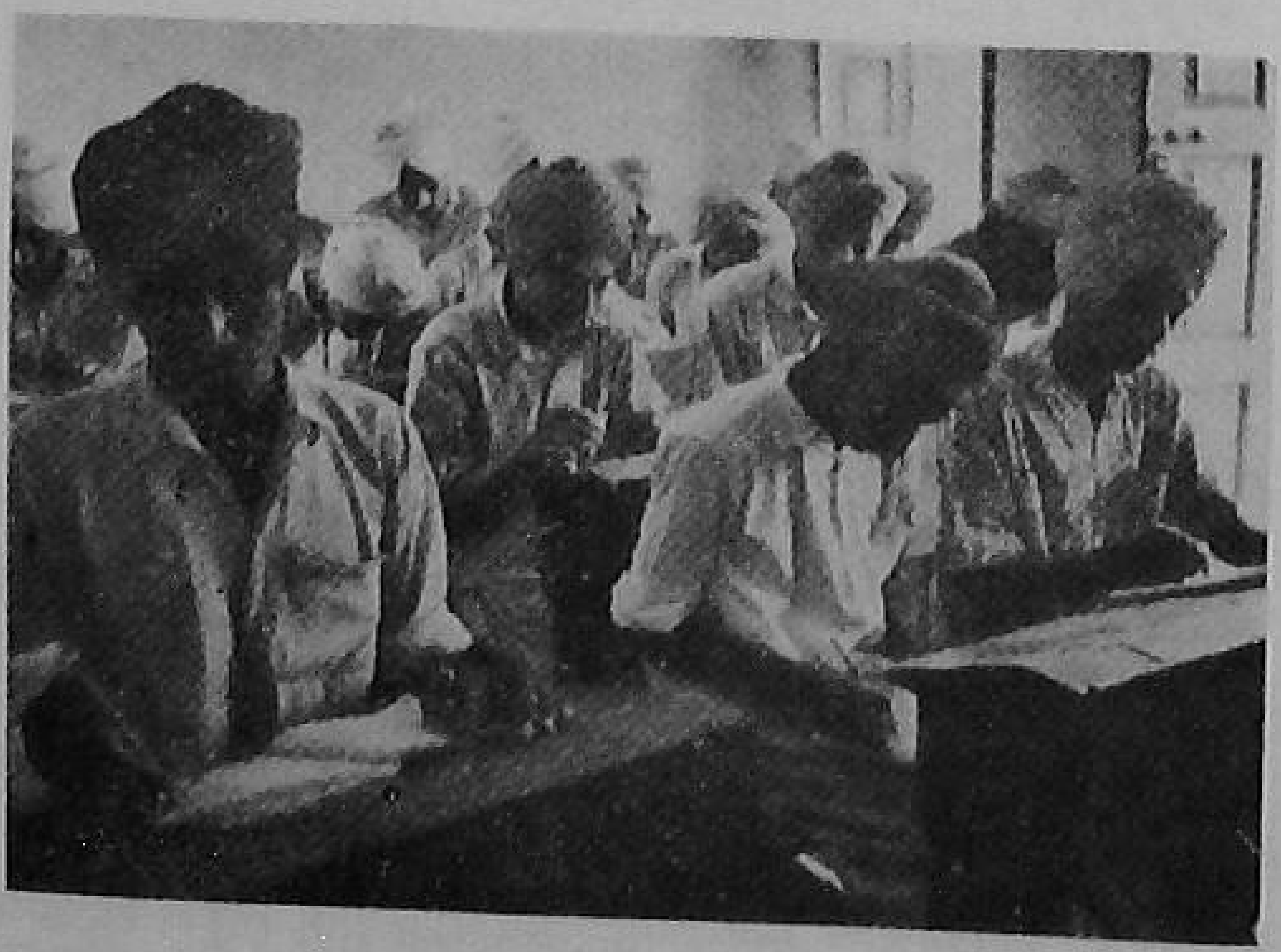
"Yes. I find good company here. We find plenty of time to talk and share each other's sorrows. Above all, there is plenty of work to do here. Ever since I settled in the village five years ago, I have been engaged in removing many of the handicaps that the villagers had been suffering from and in securing the much-needed basic facilities for them. Since they elected me as a Sarpanch two years ago, plenty of work has come about my way and I find hardly any time for idling away in gossips or in playing cards or chess as most of the retired people do. All my children are now grown up and well-settled in life. I and my wife are the only persons living at home. But for this new-found work for me in the village, life would have hung heavy on me."

I nodded assent. He added, "What gives me the greatest pleasure is that I am doing something to relieve the misery of the people and trying to help build a better and more prosperous village."

Capt. Sant Singh took me round the village and pointed out the various improvements that had been effected in the village since he settled there. We were standing on a neat brick-paved spot in the heart of the village. Right in front of us were the Panchayat Ghar and the Multi-purpose Co-operative Society. There was also a sanitary well with raised parapet walls and a metallic dancing peacock installed at the top more for decorative purposes than to serve as a weather-cock. The Sarpanch pointed out that when he came to the village, that place was full of mud and slush and the women carrying pitchers of water on their head often slipped and injured themselves. Most of the streets had now been paved with bricks. Almost all the boys and girls of school-going age, now went to the school. From a Primary School, they had now a High School on the building of which they had spent more than Rs. 25,000. I was informed that a large number of people had gone out from the village to serve as taxi drivers in Bombay or Calcutta or as businessmen as far as Malaya.

The Village Service Co-operative

To High School

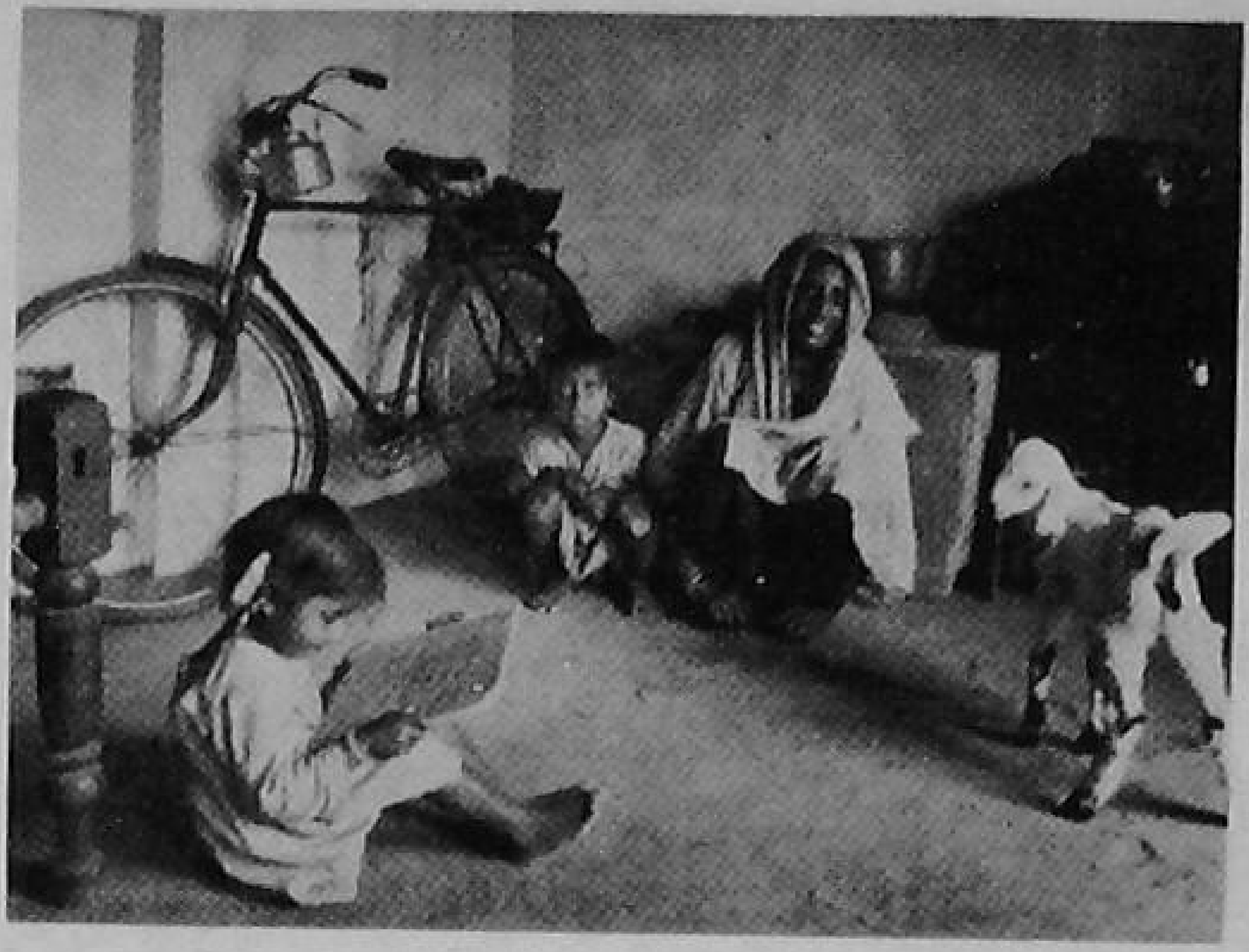


That showed their remarkable enterprising spirit which had brought a good name to the Punjab. These brave sons of the Punjab, though living and working in far-off lands never forgot their home. It was through their generous contributions that the building of the school had been constructed. While going round the village, I saw a separate ward known as the "Malaya Mohalla" where the people having their business in Malaya had built beautiful and stately houses for their residence.

"With the electrification of the village", the Sarpanch said, "A new chapter has been turned over in the lives of the people and the village as a whole." Because of the street-lighting, the village was no longer plunged in darkness as it used to be in the past. The farmer after working hard in the fields in the blazing sun returned home and got immediate comfort by switching on the electric fan. Electric gadgets like electric press and electric heater have found their way into several houses. Inside the house of the Sarpanch, sitting on a sofa, as I sipped a glass of cold *sherbat,* under the electric fan, I could not fail to notice the great improvement that had come in the standard of living of the villagers. They had almost all the amenities that the city people could get. Indeed in some respects, they were better off—fresh air, open sunshine, unadulterated food and plenty of milk, eggs and vegetables!

S. Sant Singh told me that the secret of success of their prosperity lay in increasing their agricultural production. The whole village had been saturated with improved wheat seed *i.e.* C273. Almost every farmer used the improved plough. Adequate fertilisers and insecticides were available from the Co-operative Store. The Society had a membership of 260, with a share capital of Rs. 10,000. A unique feature of the Society was that it had deposits of about Rs. 19,000 from individuals. Although, it had advanced loans up to Rs. 17,000 to its members, it had not obtained even a Naya Paisa loan from the Government.

During the Emergency, the village Panchayat had risen to the occasion and played a glorious role. Keeping up its past military traditions, the village had sent fifty recruits to join the Army. The Sarpanch himself being a retired army officer, took keen and personal interest in furthering the



The family of a Jawan on active service, which received special attention and sympathy from the Village Panchayat

war efforts on behalf of the village as a whole. The village had contributed some gold ornaments besides Rs. 6,500 in cash towards the National Defence Fund. The Panchayat took special care of a poor family of Kalwant Kaur whose husband had gone on active service. Immediately on receipt of a complaint from her that she was being harassed by the brother of her husband, the Panchayat members reached her house and effected a compromise between them. She was no longer bothered after that. This produced a healthy effect all round and no other complaint was received from any other family. The Panchayat decided to entertain complaints without insisting on the usual court fee from the family members of a person on active service.

"What is your experience of working with the villagers?" I asked. Captain Sant Singh replied, "I have great faith in them. They are simple and honest people though when misled by self-seeking and unscrupulous persons, they become involved in party factions."

"Do they take interest in the development activities?"

"Yes; they do. They take to any improved practice provided they are convinced that the same is a practical and paying proposition. They are very realistic in approach."

"Have you met any difficulty in securing their approval of any new schemes launched by the Government?"

"I have been trained in the army discipline. Consequently, I sometimes commit the mistake of taking things for granted. But in a democracy, things take their own time in being accepted by the people. My fellow villagers, therefore, sometimes fail to keep pace with me and they think that I am treating them as sepoys."

"But won't things be easy enough now that the schemes of Village Volunteer Force and Defence Labour Bank are being introduced to increase agricultural production ?"

"Yes. There is no doubt that the schemes are a step in the right direction. What we badly need in our country is discipline and organising ability amongst our people. These schemes seek to fulfil this need in the present Emergency. However, we have not been able to make enough progress, in so far as these schemes are concerned. The greatest lacuna is that there is no co-ordination between the training imparted by the P.R.D. and the members of the Village Volunteer Force."

This led him to discuss a number of problems and difficulties that he had to face in the discharge of his duties as a Sarpanch. He explained how due to lack of sufficient co-operation from the various Government departments, the work of the community suffered. He had a feeling that the Government officials did not attach enough importance to the office of the Sarpanch. Had it not been for his personal influence, his knowledge and wide experience, he would have been given short shrift by the officials and not many things would have been achieved. Even now, he asserted, he failed to get several things done because of the intransigence and arrogance on the part of some of the officials. He had to play the role of a dogged attorney to get things done in the village.

A view of the field channel dug. This will carry water from the Tube-well to the fields for irrigation.

According to him, it was from the police that the panchayat got the least co-operation. The police took little action on the complaints filed by the Panchayats. The members of the Panchayats were often involved in litigation by the people against whom the Panchayat decided their cases. This gave the police an opportunity to harass the poor panches. He narrated how some of the panches had to court imprisonment for a day. They were involved in a case because they insisted on implementing a unanimous decision of the Panchayat demanding the removal of a liquor shop from the village. This liquor shop is now located at the tip of the village pond outside the village and is the first object to greet a visitor to the village.

The Sarpanch's tale of woe was a long and pathetic one. He deplored the fact that the Panchayats did not get any preference in the matter of allotment of any of the essential items in short supply such as cement, bricks, coal or iron. And the result was that the pace of development work had considerably slowed down. He further expressed how in the absence of adequate powers of the Panchayat and the long procedure involved in the acquisition of land by the Government, the Panchayat had not succeeded in arranging suitable disposal of drainage and sewage water outside the village. Continuing, he said that it was not only the Panchayat that felt helpless but at times even the Government departments failed to achieve their objective. He disclosed how in his village, the Government had installed four tube-wells, each at a cost of over Rs. 40,000 with a whole-time operator to look after them. These tube-wells were not being utilised to their optimum capacity because the field channels had not been dug.

"But is it not the duty of the farmers themselves to dig the field channels", I inquired.

Capt. Sant Singh replied, "Yes. But the trouble is that some of the land-owners do not permit the field channels to be extended beyond their fields.

In such cases, no progress can be made unless the lands are acquired for digging the field channels."

"How much more land, do you think could have been irrigated if all the field channels were dug ?"

"At least a thousand acres !"

I wondered why the gordian knot could not be cut asunder in view of the national emergency when every effort was being made to increase the agricultural production.

"No. But an easy way has been found out", quipped in the Sarpanch, "The Tube-well organisation has been wound up and the charge of the tube-wells with all their problems has been passed on to the Panchayats."

"Yes. Perhaps the idea is that you may be able to convince the dissident land-owners to permit the digging of field channels whereas at Government level, a solution would not have been possible without resorting to law." The Sarpanch agreed with the view but felt that the Panchayats were ill-equipped to face the problem. Even the blueprints of the field channels had not been passed on to them so far. He said, "I shall have to fight against the red-tapism and indifference of the officials at all levels, before I succeed in getting the blueprints." Continuing, he said, "The sale of fish in the village ponds used to be auctioned at some central place,—the contractors or the officials of the fishery department, having never seen the fish ponds on site. It was highly improper. I insisted that the fish pond of my village should not be auctioned without my presence. This had the desired effect is so far as I was concerned. The sale proceeds of the fish pond of my Panchayat went up from two hundred to over a thousand rupees."

After pausing for a few moments, he went on to say, "How many, do you think, are there Sarpanches who have got the knowledge or the competence to wage this battle from day to day ?"

Before I could give any reply, he remarked, "The whole question boils down to this that tangible results are possible only when a Sarpanch, aware of his powers and responsibilities, asserts himself and acts as the watch-dog of the village community. But it requires lot of patience and courage." "Some people whose interests I have challenged", he added, "have openly and frankly desired that I should get away from the *gaddi* of Sarpanch, otherwise......"

"But does it not upset you sometime ?"

"No" came the firm reply, "I have begun to take these things as part of the game now. I take comfort from the advice embodied in this....". So saying, he produced a letter from his file which read......

"I want you to realise that August 15, 1947 *brought about our release from the shackles of the British rule. We still have many enemies of freedom in this country. For instance, the bad Government servant, the bad politician, the bad businessman, the bad trader etc. We have to fight the battle with all these forces before we can claim to have won freedom for the people ultimately. This battle is going to be even longer than the battle we had fought against the British rulers. You should not, therefore, feel impatient."*

This was a letter from Shri S. K. Dey, the Union Minister for Community Development and Co-operation. I pictured in my mind a valuable link between the rural people's Attorney at the Centre and the one in the village.

★

A BLOCK VISITED

VISHNU DUTT

BASSI PATHANAN Block, consisting of 183 villages is situated in Sirhind Tehsil in the Punjab at a distance of about 160 Kilometres from Delhi.

REMOVAL OF JEEPS: A BLESSING IN DISGUISE

One of the immediate effects of the national emergency on this Block, as probably on others too, has been the withdrawal of the Block jeep under the orders of the State Government for urgent works connected with the emergency. The existence of jeeps in the Blocks had been the source of trouble in the past and it had given rise to lot of mutual jealousies and acrimonious feelings between the members of the staff. Other Government departments had looked upon the Community Development Department with envy precisely because of the latter being in the privileged position of having jeeps. The Block Development Officer was often the butt of attacks because he was alleged to enjoy jeep rides by visiting places where he was not supposed to go officially. The Block Development Officer and his staff in this Block have now heaved a sigh of relief and they do not mind the jeep being taken away from them. Though the frequency of their visits to the villages has gone down, it has been more than compensated by the intensity and thoroughness with which the tours are now carried out. Each official and members of the Block Committee has been allotted a few villages for intensive work. This arrangement has ensured a more intimate contact with the villagers. In the absence of the Jeep there is no desire to rush back to the headquarters after visiting a village. And they are now able to spend good deal of time in the villages. This gives them a better opportunity to study the local problems. It has indeed been a blessing in disguise.

PLOUGH AND THE SWORD

The Punjabis make very good soldiers. Quite a large number of them are already serving in the Army. The emergency has given further fillip to this recruitment drive and many a young man from the villagers has come forward to join the Army and serve the motherland. From the plough to the sword and *vice versa* seems to be a natural change-over in the Punjab. The military tradition is being well kept in the villages of Bassi Pathanan Block. In Garhuwan village which I visited, there were as many as 150 ex-Service men,—the Sarpanch himself being a retired Captain. During the emergency, fifty youngmen had joined as recruits in the Army. The block officials engaged in development work were not immune from this craze for a military career. The Block Development Officer had already been selected for a Commission in the Army and he had left for training. The Extension Officer (Panchayats) Gurcharan Singh who was officiating as a B.D.O. confided to me that he too had appeared before the Service Selection Board, but could not get a chance and felt confident that he must succeed next time.

VILLAGE VOLUNTEER FORCE

There is a keen desire on the part of the rural people to receive military training. Taking advantage of this wide-spread desire of the people, the State Government has made arrangements to impart training in parade, rifle-shooting etc. to the villagers at their doorsteps through the semi-military organisation known as the Punjab Raksha Dal. In the Block I visited, training was being given to groups of about fifty people each at twenty-five different centres by the P.R.D. instructors. In Navagaon, the training had been started on the very day I visited the village. I was informed that the training would be continued for a period of about 6 weeks. In this way, the entire Block would be covered in 6 to 7 months. The P.R.D. has its own hierarchy of officials at the Block, District and State levels. There were no signs of co-ordination between the P.R.D. officials and the Development Department. The understanding of the concept of Village Volunteer Force Scheme was still in a preliminary stage. The members of the V.V.F. were yet to be enrolled in 50 to 60 per cent of the villages in the Block. The Civil Defence training as conducted by the P.R.D. did not seem to have any relation with the wider schemes of

(*Continued on page 11*)

POULTRY FARMING FORGI

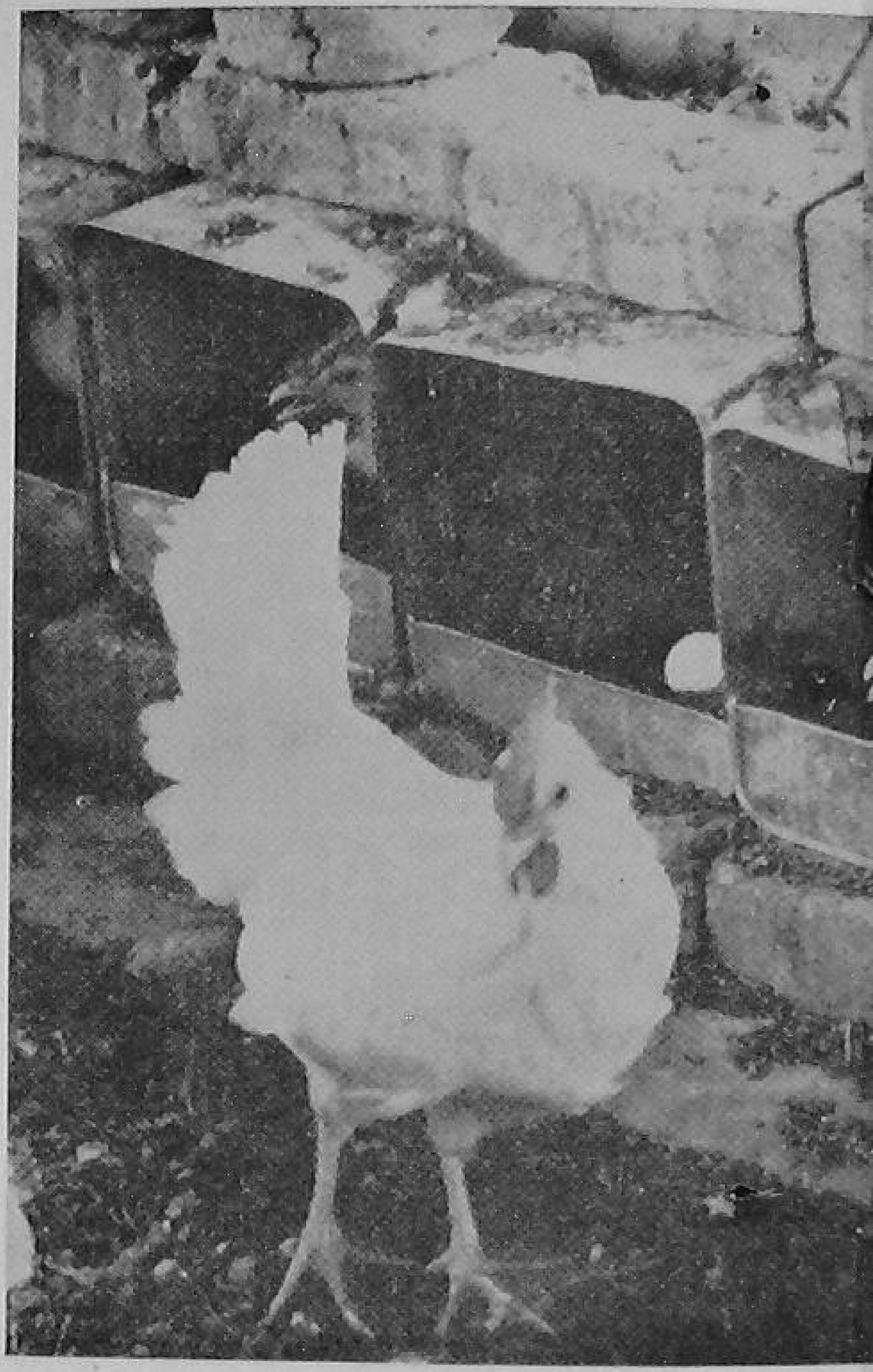
VISHNU

A TRUE EDUCATIONAL Centre cannot fail to radiate light and knowledge around it. The Orientation and Study Centres of the Community Development Department are nothing if they do not equip the trainees with the proper mental outlook and technique of working amongst the rural people. It was to save these institutes from becoming academic and unrealistic in character that five villages in the vicinity were attached to them to serve as laboratories for practical work. It may be claimed without fear of contradiction that front-rank Centres in the country have invariably excelled in the record of their performance in those villages.

Judged from this criterion, the Orientation and Study Centre at Nilokheri has successfully demonstrated its utility in so far as it has become a light-house of knowledge on poultry farming to all and sundry in the neighbourhood. A contagion spreads at a terrifying speed. But a healthy scheme can also propagate itself rapidly provided there is the proper stimulus and atmosphere for it.

SUCCESS AND ITS CAUSES

Less than eight months ago, the number of poultry birds in and around Nilokheri was not more than a few hundred, each individual family having about a dozen layers to give eggs enough for home consumption. Today there are nearly twenty-five thousand birds. Most of the families are aiming to have 100 to 1,000 and even more layers for commercial purposes. What are the causes of this phenomenal spread of the scheme? A careful analysis of the factors leading to its success may well provide the "Open Sesame" which the Ali Babas of the C.D. Programme are in search of to unlock many a hidden treasure in various fields of their activities. A cursory observation will indicate that there are two main factors which have paved the way for its tremendous success. In the first place, the scheme fulfils a felt need of the people. It provides them a handy source of subsidiary income. A family can easily afford to keep birds up to one hundred and thus ensure an income up to Rs. 100 per month. Those who have whole time to spare can keep a larger number of birds and draw an income up to Rs. 500 and even more depending upon the number of birds they keep. Secondly, through the good offices of the Orientation and Study Centre, it has been possible to make the scheme self-sufficient from the point of view of supplies of hatching birds, preparation of feed, manufacture of automatic feeders and water fountains, medical aid to birds, construction of model houses for poultry and finally the marketing of eggs.



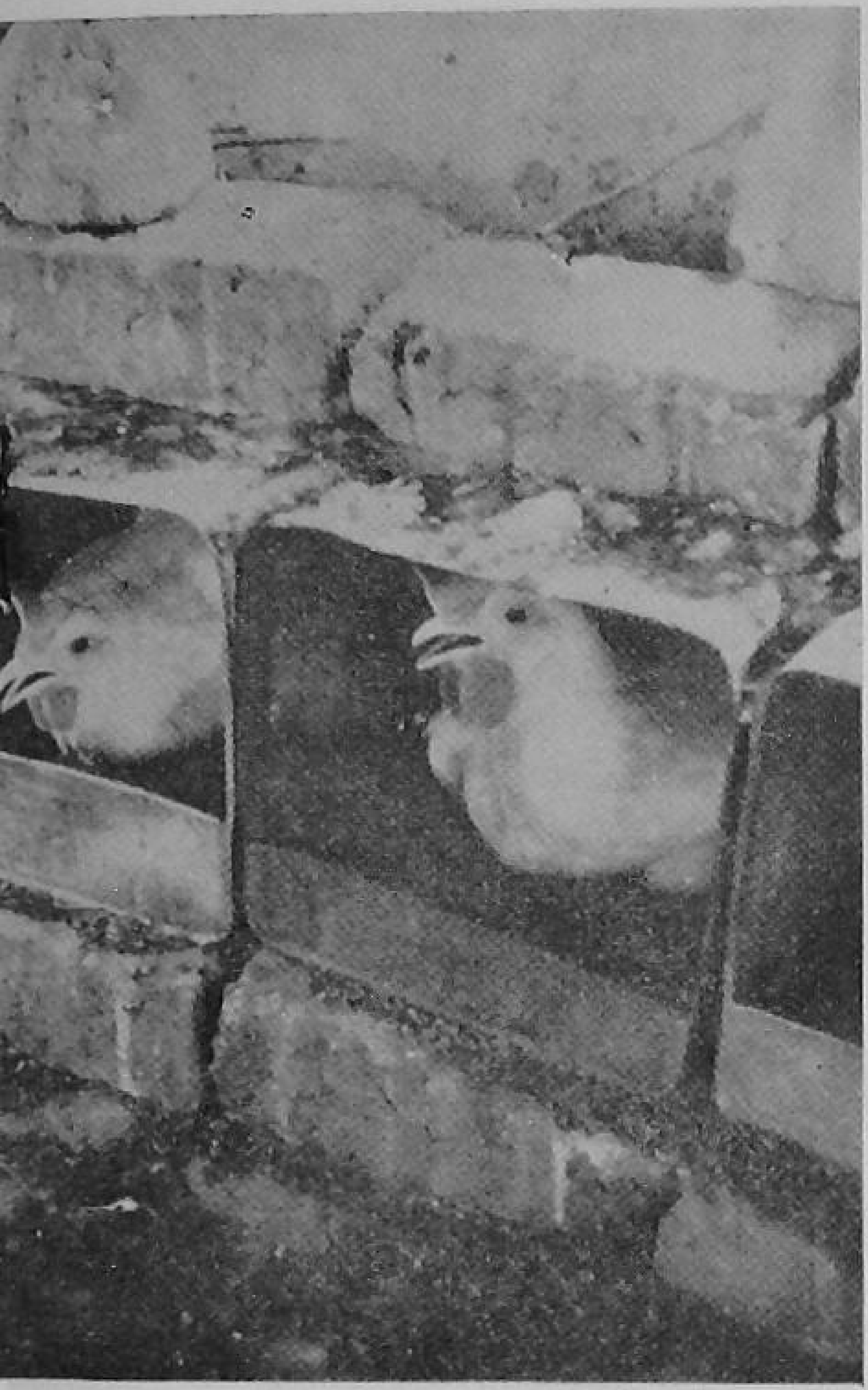
A section of the Poultry Farm at the Ori
The hen in front has just delivered hersel

EXPERIMENT LAUNCHED

In the initial stages, there were hardly any facilities available to enable a novice to launch

ES AHEAD AT NILOKHERI

DUTT



ientation and Study Centre, Nilokheri. elf of an egg; the others are in position.

upon the unexplored field of poultry farming. There was no atmosphere for it. Even the poultry farm at the Training Centre existed but in name only. It was a chance visit by S. Surjan Singh Gill, the present Principal of the Centre to Gurdaspur,—the home of poultry breeders in the Punjab, that gave him an insight into the bright prospects of poultry farming for the common man. On return, he decided to put the poultry farm at the Centre on a proper footing. But lack of funds was the main handicap. He hit upon a plan. He prevailed upon the trainees' Panchayat which had some funds at its disposal to undertake the project of a small poultry farm. On the 20th October last year, the Panchayat purchased 200 chicks of white Leghorn variety from Karnal. They were reared in a scientific way according to what is known as the "deep litter system". After six weeks, they were vaccinated against Ranikhet, and a few days later against fowlpox as well. After 3 months, the male cockerels were segregated and a flock of 95 hens and 12 cocks was retained for breeding purposes. There was a mortality of five birds only. Balanced feed procured from Government. Ambala Poultry Farm was fed to the birds. But a crisis came in February this year when the Farm authorities at Ambala expressed their inability to supply any feed. Faced with a pressing problem, they decided to prepare their own feed for the birds at the Centre and thus become self-sufficient in this all-important matter. The Principal obtained the formula for preparing the feed from the Government Poultry Farm, Ambala. Thereafter, the trainees themselves began to prepare the feed for the birds. By turns, they looked after the poultry farm. They were taught how to prepare even the automatic feeders and the improvised water fountains. The first hen started laying eggs after it was nearly five months old. They are now having a net saving of Rs. 100 per month from the sale of eggs. The layers are expected to have a life of active usefulness for about one year after which they will be disposed of. In the meantime, a fresh batch of layers would be ready to take their place. It is estimated that during this period, the project will have yielded a net saving of Rs. 1,400 after deducting an initial investment of Rs. 200 only on the purchase of chicks and a monthly expenditure of about Rs. 100 on their feed etc. The Trainees' Panchayat is happy that it would be richer by that amount.

It is this highly remunerative aspect of the project that has created a profound impact on the villages in the neighbourhood. At the time of the visit of Shri S. K. Dey, Union Minister for Community Development and Co-operation, to the Training Centre early this year, hundreds of villagers got an opportunity to see for themselves the highly economic value of the project. As a result, several of them were inspired to

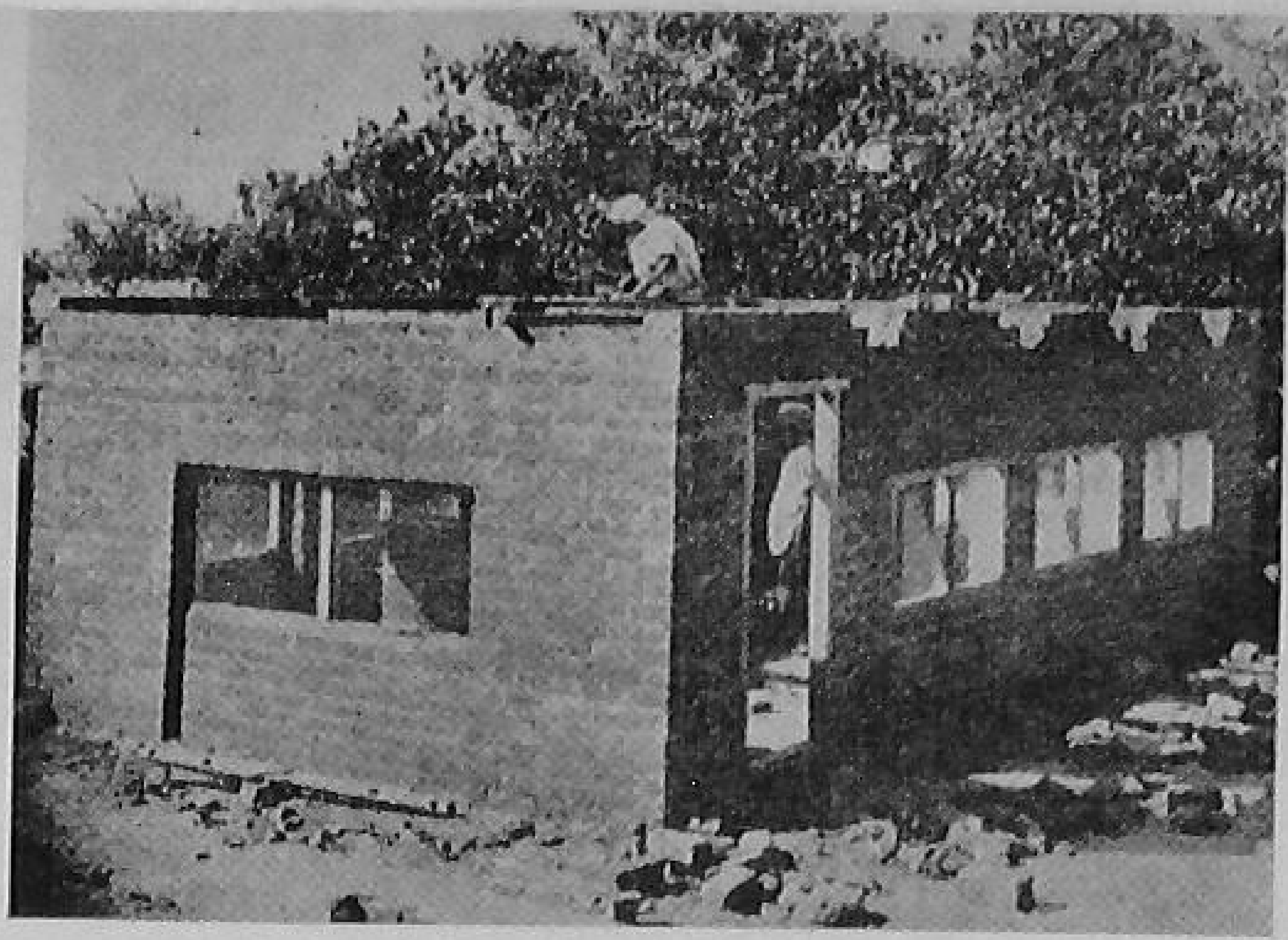
undertake poultry farming as a whole-time or a subsidiary occupation. More than a score of families in and around Nilokheri have already set up their respective poultry farms.

UNBOUNDED ENTHUSIASM

In a hurried tour, I saw about ten such poultry farms. Their owners were full of unbounded enthusiasm and looked to the future with great hope. In Nilokheri town itself, there is the twenty year old Raghvinder Mahajan who took his B.Sc. degree last year and has started his poultry farm in January this year after purchasing 20 birds from the Orientation and Study Centre. Later, he added 175 chicks to his flock. He is so much engrossed in the project that he has begun to prepare and sell on a commercial basis the feed for the birds for which there is an increasing demand. He got the formula for the preparation of the feed from the Training Centre. At present, there is a daily sale of 75 kilograms of feed at his store. He is also dealing in the sale of the hanging automatic feeders and water fountains. To my query whether he would prefer a white-collared job to his present occupation, he replied "What can be more white-collared than this?" He expressed full satisfaction with his present occupation and he hoped to raise his net income to over Rs. 500 during the current year. Would that the educated youth of our country followed the splendid example of this enterprising youngman and not vainly hankered after soft jobs!

Sudesh Kumar, another youngster, a non-matric of Nilokheri township has also taken up poultry farming in right earnestness. He has spent a sum of about Rs. 3,500 on constructing a building on scientific lines to house about a thousand birds. He got training in poultry farming on his own at a private model poultry farm

Bhartu and his wife are looking after the birds



A spacious hall provided with windows of wire-gauze is under construction on the top of a house in village Nilokheri to serve as a poultry farm

at Rani Shaver near Gurgaon through the good offices of the Principal, Training Centre. He is making good use of his training in that he scrupulously observes the scientific techniques of rearing the birds. To avoid infection, he must wash all his utensils with potassium permanganate before serving food or drink to the birds. He has also learnt to prepare the balanced feed for the birds. The water fountains, and automatic feeders in use at his poultry farm are decidedly of a better design than those even at the Training Centre.

The craze for rearing birds for eggs has caught the imagination of even the vegetarians. Mrs. Gupta who is otherwise a strict vegetarian is rearing a flock of about fifty hens without a male. They are laying what are known as 'vegetarian eggs'. These eggs being without life, can be consumed by vegetarians without any compunction.

However, it was the teenager Devinder Singh, a member of the Youth Club of Nilokheri Village whose enthusiasm for poultry farming seemed to beat all records. He has built at the top of his house a 10 ft. by 15 ft. room with spacious wiregauzed windows to serve as a poultry farm for his hundred birds. He was feeding them when we reached his house. The drinking water in the vessel seemed to be rather dirty. Principal, Shri Gill, who was accompanying me intently looked at the inverted pitcher of water and noticed that it had no hole near its neck and that was why it could not serve as a water fountain, enabling fresh water to ooze out as and when the birds drank it. Devinder Singh had

(Continued on page 16)

A BLOCK VISITED

(*Continued from page 7*)

Village Volunteer Force and the Defence Labour Bank. The conception of a trained and disciplined Task Force for production, working under the control and discipline of the Dalpati is yet to grow. In the Punjab, the Sarpanch is also the Dalpati. Perhaps it would have been better if another person, preferably a younger man, were nominated as the Dalpati. Instructions had been sent to the Panchayats to prepare registers for Defence Labour Bank and to determine the priority of works to be executed through shramdan. An important project proposed to be undertaken in June through shramdan organised by the Defence Labour Bank, was the digging of a 4-mile long drain from village Nanheri to Ghamandgarh. As a result of this drain about 1,000 acres of water-logged land would be rendered fit for cultivation. Of the two villages I visited, only in Navagaon, the Panchayat had prepared the registers enrolling the members of the Village Volunteer Force and those offering labour under the Defence Labour Bank Scheme.

The Panchayats expressed the opinion that the success of the scheme depended upon the legal sanction behind it. The Sarpanches argued that in every village there were one or two defaulters who would not do the community's job unless there was legal compulsion to do so. Luckily, the Panchayati Raj Act in the Punjab had got that legal sanction too. It appeared that a lot of ground will have to be covered before the Village Volunteer Force and the Defence Labour Bank Schemes come into their own.

DEVELOPMENT WORK

The elections to the Panchayati Raj bodies had taken place nearly two years ago. As many as 65 out of 107 Panchayats had been elected unanimously. Another relieving feature of these elections was that they were free from the virus of casteism or communalism. However, as time passed by, some of the Panchayats and the Panchayat Samiti itself became infected with groupism and party politics. It was alleged that a vote of no-confidence had been passed two months ago against the Chairman of the Panchayat Samiti, yet he continued to be in office because of some technical flaw in the no-confidence motion. All this had an adverse effect on the progress of development work in the Block.

The Block Staff as yet unaffected by party pulls and pressures has been devoting its attention to development schemes, particularly agricultural production. The Block though largely unirrigated is afflicted with the problems of floods and water-logging. The Government has installed tube-wells in various parts of the Block to meet the situation. But surprisingly enough, the tube-wells are not being utilised to their optimum capacity and large areas are lying unirrigated because of the reluctance on the part of some of the cultivators to permit the digging of water courses through their fields. Several water channels which were supposed to have been bricked by the Government are still lying incomplete and in a dilapidated condition. It is understood that the Department has after an unsuccessful attempt lasting over five years, now passed on the ownership and the day-to-day management of these tube-wells to the Panchayats. It remains to be seen how far the Panchayats would succeed in setting the matters right. It is easy to understand their diffidence since they have neither the technical know-how nor adequate powers to acquire land for laying channels. But they have one advantage over the Government Department, *viz.*, that they can persuade the individual farmers to agree to offer a small portion of their land free of cost for constructing field channels in the interest of all concerned.

Luckily, the soil being enriched by natural floods does not need lot of irrigation to produce good crops. One often finds in the Block wheat, rice and even sugarcane cultivated on unirrigated lands. Almost the whole Block is saturated with improved seeds and every village has some improved ploughs. The Agricultural production has made considerable headway since the Block came into existence in 1957.

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GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE TO

SERVICE CO-OPERATIVES: State Government provides subsidy subject to a maximum of Rs. 900 per Society over a period of 3 to 5 years to meet working expenses. The Central Government gives as grant 50 per cent of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

CENTRAL BANK: CENTRAL AND PRIMARY LAND MORTGAGE BANKS: Cost of additional managerial and supervisory staff is subsidised by the State Government for 3 years on a tapering scale—100 per cent in the first year, 66-2/3 per cent in the second year and 33½ per cent in the third year. Central Government gives as grant 50 per cent of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

CENTRAL BANK AND SERVICE CO-OPERATIVE: Outright grants of 1 per cent and 3 per cent of the additional loans over the preceding year is granted by central banks and service co-operatives respectively to be given by the State Government. In intensive agricultural districts, the outright grants is at 2% and 4% respectively. Central Government gives as grant 50 per cent of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

APEX CREDIT CO-OPERATIVES: Cost of additional managerial staff is subsidised by the State Government for 3 years on a tapering scale i.e. 100 per cent in the first year, to be reduced by one-third in the second year and to be further reduced by one-third in the third year. Central Government gives as grant 50 per cent of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

MARKETING SOCIETIES —PRIMARY, CENTRAL AND APEX: (a) Central Government provides loans repayable in 15 years up to 75% of share capital contributed by State Government.

(b) Additional managerial staff is subsidised by the State for 3 years on a tapering scale as referred to above. Central Government gives as grant 50% of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

NOTE: The Central assistance will be subject to the condition that the State Government's contribution to the share capital of a society should generally be on a matching basis with members' contribution. The proportion of members' contribution to State Government's contribution has, however, varied in some States according to the stage of co-operative development.

PROCESSING SOCIETIES OTHER THAN CO-OPERATIVE SUGAR FACTORIES:

Loan for share capital and grant for additional managerial staff as mentioned at (a) above.

CO-OPERATIVE SUGAR FACTORIES: The State Government provides share capital contribution to co-operative sugar factories. The Central Government advances loans to State Governments repayable in 15 years up to a maximum of Rs. 25 lakhs per co-operative, on a matching basis with the share capital collected from members other than the State Government subject to the condition that at least 75% of such share capital is collected from grower members.

GODOWNS FOR MARKETING SOCIETIES AND SERVICE CO-OPERATIVES: (a) Subject to prescribed ceilings, societies are given 75% of the cost of the godown as loan and 25% as grant. The Central Government provides 62½% of the total cost as loan and 12½% as grant, the balance being met by the State Government.

(b) Subsidy, subject to prescribed ceilings, for meeting hiring charges of godowns of marketing societies and service co-operatives. Central Government gives as grant 50% of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

CO-OPERATIVE FARMING: (a) Subsidy for managerial expenses subject to a maximum of Rs. 1,200 over 3 to 5 years shared equally between the Centre and the State.

CO-OPERATIVES AT A GLANCE

(b) Godown—Subject to a maximum of Rs. 5,000 the State Government advances 75% of the cost of the godown as loan and 25% as grant. The Central Government provides 62½% of the cost as loan and 12½% as grant, the balance being found by the State Government.

(c) Medium and long-term loans—The State Government provides medium and long-term loans subject to a maximum of Rs. 4,000 per society. The Central Government provides 75% of the amount advanced as loan repayable in 15 years.

NOTE : In case of Farming Societies taken up as Pilot Projects, the State Government contributes share capital subject to a maximum of Rs. 2,000 per society. The Central Government advances 75% of the amount contributed by the State Government as loans repayable in 15 years.

TRAINING CENTRES FOR CO-OPERATIVE FARMING: 75% of the non-recurring expenditure and 50% of the recurring expenditure given as grant by the Central Government, balance being found by the State Government.

EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR CO-OPERATIVE FARMING: The Central Government provides 100% grant to meet the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

CONSUMERS' CO-OPERATIVES: (a) Central Government provides loans up to 75% of amount contributed by State Government as share capital, loan being repayable in 15 years. Ceilings may be prescribed for amount to be contributed as share capital to primary and other consumer co-operative societies.

(b) Subsidy for managerial expenses in accordance with prescribed terms is given by State Government. Central Government gives as grant 50% of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

(c) Godowns of apex wholesale stores—subject to prescribed ceilings, 75% of the cost is advanced by State Government to a society as loan and 25% as subsidy. The Centre provides 62½% of the cost as loan and 12½% as subsidy.

(d) Hiring of godowns—subject to prescribed terms, subsidy is given by State Government. Central Government gives as grant 50% of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

RICKSHAW-PULLERS' CO-OPERATIVES: (a) Grant—50% towards managerial expenses which are subject to a maximum of Rs. 900 spread over 5 years. (b) loan—100% subject to a maximum of Rs. 20,000.

COLD STORAGES: Loans up to Rs. 4 lakhs may be advanced by the State Government. The Central Government provides loans repayable in 15 years to the extent of 75% of the amount advanced by the State Government.

CO-OPERATIVE PRINTING PRESSES: (a) Central Government provides loans to State Government to the extent of its share capital contribution. (b) State Government subsidises managerial expenses for 3 years on a tapering scale, subject to a maximum of Rs. 12,000 in the case of printing presses set up at State level and of Rs. 6,000 in the case of presses at district and regional levels. The Central Government gives as grant 50% of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

LABOUR CO-OPERATIVES: Managerial subsidy to be shared between the Centre and the State Government on 50 : 50 basis is given as follows:—

(i) Rs. 3,000 for a district level union for a period of 3 to 5 years.

(ii) Rs. 900 for a primary society for a period of 3 to 5 years.

(iii) Cost not exceeding Rs. 7,200 spread over a period of 3 to 5 years for one technical assistant to be provided for a group of 10 primary societies.

CO-OPERATIVE UNIONS: (i) State Government meets the entire expenditure on the

(*Continued on page 16*)

FROM THE CENTRE

TRAINING OF MEMBERS AND SECRETARIES OF NYAYA PANCHAYATS

CONSEQUENT upon the Report of the Study Team on Nyaya Panchayats and considering that the successful functioning of the Nyaya Panchayats largely depends on the proper training of the Panches, the Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation has requested the State Governments to make arrangements for ten days' training for Members and Secretaries of Nyaya Panchayats at the Panchayati Raj Training Centres already set up in the States. It has been suggested that one of the three existing instructors in the Panchayati Raj Training Centres should be qualified to handle the subject of law and procedure. Arrangements are also being made by the Government of India to bring out a manual on the subject.

* * * *

NATIONAL BOARD FOR LABOUR CO-OPERATIVES MEETS

SHRI S. K. DEY while addressing the inaugural meeting of the National Advisory Board on Labour Contract and Construction Co-operatives held recently, laid stress on the great importance of these societies in the programme for economic rehabilitation of the weaker sections of the community.

He pointed out that today in our country the affluent groups monopolised the benefit from the various programmes of economic development while the weaker sections of the community, for whom they were primarily meant, mostly failed to benefit because they were not vocal enough. He also indicated that it was because of the failure to realise that wealth could be created by sustained human effort, that we were nervous about the size of our population and the rate of its increase. In totalitarian countries the masses were regimented into productive labour. But we are in a position to achieve the same increase in production through voluntary co-operative organisation.

Shri Dey pointed out that the production plan which every village was expected to have could not be confined to agriculture alone. It would also cover various types of construction activities. Manpower for these varied programmes is available in plenty in the rural areas. But most of it is unskilled. By providing technical guidance, organisational assistance and managerial subsidies, this vast manpower could be helped to organise itself into labour and construction co-operatives for their own economic betterment as well as that of the nation as a whole. This, Shri Dey affirmed, was the declared policy of the Government. But he noticed that vested interests, specially at the lower levels of the official hierarchy, often threw up considerable resistance to the implementation of the policy. This in effect was a challenge to our democratic way of life, to the authority of the Parliament and that of the Cabinet. Tolerating such distortion of policy in implementation would be tantamount to abdication of duty by the highest organs of the democratic community.

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LARGE-SCALE PROCESSING UNITS ON CO-OPERATIVE BASIS

THE UNION MINISTRY of Community Development and Co-operation has requested the State Governments and Union Territories to encourage the growth of large-scale co-operative processing units.

In this connection, the Ministry has pointed out that significant progress had been made by the co-operative sugar factories. These factories now account for nearly 20 per cent of the total production of sugar in the country. One of the major factors that has contributed to the rapid progress is the existence of satisfactory arrangements for financing the block capital requirements of these co-operatives.

In order to encourage the growth of other large-scale processing units, the Centre has stressed the need for providing them with adequate finance. At present, the State Finance Corporations can give loans up to Rs. 20 lakhs to any single unit. It has been suggested that in the case of co-operatives requiring long-term loans up to Rs. 20 lakhs, the State Finance Corporations should finance them and wherever necessary the State Governments may guarantee 10 per cent of such loans.

The Industrial Finance Corporation will also be willing to consider on merits the applications from societies for loans exceeding Rs. 20 lakhs.

The Central Government would be prepared to consider on merits requests for sharing with the State Governments guaranteeing of loans in excess of Rs. 20 lakhs on a 50 : 50 basis in individual cases in respect of co-operative processing units dealing in industry or commodities the main decisions about which are controlled by the Central Government.

Further, the Central Government's willingness to consider guaranteeing 50 per cent of the I.F.C. loans in respect of other large-scale processing units will be subject to arrangements being made for ensuring the automatic mechanism for repayment of loans. In this context, it may be mentioned that co-operative sugar factories deduct compulsory deposits from cane price payable to the growers and these deductions are available for repaying the loans.

* * * *

CO-OPERATIVE FARMING IN GRAMDAN AREAS

A SPECIAL scheme for financial assistance to co-operative farming societies in gramdan villages and Bhoodan areas has been formulated by the Government of India. This is because these areas were not so far receiving adequate supply of credit for production and other purposes.

One crore of rupees has already been earmarked for financing co-operative farming societies in gramdan and Bhoodan areas for the remaining period of the Third Plan.

For 1963-64, a sum of Rs. 24 lakhs has been earmarked for the purpose and the State Governments have been requested by the Union Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation to formulate the proposals for grant of financial assistance.

TRAINING FOR MAHILA MANDAL MEMBERS

THE TRAINING of 25,000 women workers by the end of the Third Plan for various community development programmes is envisaged in a Centrally sponsored scheme, which has been circulated to the State Governments.

Under this scheme, a one-month training course is to be arranged for office-bearers of Mahila Mandals so that they can help the Mukhya Sevikas and Gram Sevikas in the implementation of the community development programmes. To begin with, training will be given to workers from blocks situated in areas where special agricultural programmes are being taken up.

The expectation is that the training will promote leadership among office-bearers of Mahila Mandals and help village women to know more about civics and hygiene. The training will also encourage young women to take active part in the Village Volunteer Force programme.

The existing Gram Sevika and Mukhya Sevika training centres will impart training under the scheme by organising four camps a year. Besides training workers, regional camps will be organised to train about 150 women trainers.

The entire scheme will involve an expenditure of about Rs. 27 lakhs, which will be met by the Government of India and will be outside the ceiling of the State plans. However, on account of the present emergency, only Rs. 4 lakhs has been initially provided during 1963-64 for this scheme. This will provide for the training of 4,500 workers during the next year.

GOVT. ASSISTANCE TO CO-OPERATIVES AT A GLANCE

(*Continued from page 13*)

Special Committee set up by the State Co-operative Union for the management of the training centres for subordinate personnel. Central Government gives as grant 50% of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

(ii) State Government gives as grant 75% of the expenditure incurred by the Co-operative Unions on approved non-recurring items such as audio-visual equipment. Central Government give 2/3rds of this expenditure as grant.

(iii) State Government will give as grant 75% of the recurring expenditure incurred by the Co-operative Unions on activities relating to co-operative training and education programmes. The Central Government gives as grant two-thirds of the expenditure.

(iv) State Government provides as loan up to 75% of the capital cost of setting up a printing press to the State Co-operative Union. The Central Government provides loan to the State Government to the same extent.

(v) State Government gives grant-in-aid to the extent of 100% to the Co-operative Unions and other organisations for undertaking field studies. The Central Government gives as grant 50% of the expenditure incurred by the State Government.

POULTRY FARMING FORGES AHEAD AT NILOKHERI

(*Continued from page 10*)

set up the poultry farm only a day before and he did not exactly know the technique of making an improvised water fountain from a pitcher. Shri Gill, immediately getting hold of a needle punctured a hole near the neck of the pitcher. After filling it with water up to the brim, he inverted it in a shallow trough of water. It was ready to be used as a water fountain. Shri Gill saw to it that the boy prepared another water fountain with his own hands. The former confided to me that the secret of success of the scheme lay in that the poultry breeders had known every little detail themselves so that they could stand on their own without relying on any outside assistance. Close in the neighbourhood, I saw another more spacious hall being built on the top of a house to serve as another poultry farm. It was obvious that the idea was soon catching the fancy of the rest of the villagers.

In Butana, a small village about three miles away from Nilokheri, two poor Harijans,—Bhartu and Shiv Ram have taken on loan fifty birds each from the Trainees' Panchayat, Nilokheri Centre, on condition that they would return their cost price after the birds started laying eggs. Though poor, they are doing their best to procure balanced feed for the birds. They have not been able to house the birds under proper conditions so far. Shri Shiv Ram has, however, already undertaken the construction of a separate mud house for the birds. They are looking forward with high hopes to the day when the hens will start laying the proverbial golden eggs for them.

BRIGHT FUTURE

The blaze trailed by the Orientation and Study Centre, Nilokheri is spreading like wild fire in the vicinity. More and more youngmen are being attracted towards the scheme which is fast progressing with a snowball effect. The difficulties and handicaps of the initial days have been largely overcome. Gone are the days when necessary supplies like balanced feed, automatic feeders and water fountains had to be procured from far and wide. These are now being produced locally. As the demand for chicks is far outstripping the supply, some of the enterprising poultry breeders amongst them will soon be setting up incubators to facilitate supply of chicks. A poultry co-operative society is being registered at the Tehsil level to meet the requirements of supplies and to forestall the increasing demand for marketing the eggs produced to Delhi. Never before had a scheme such bright future ahead as this one!

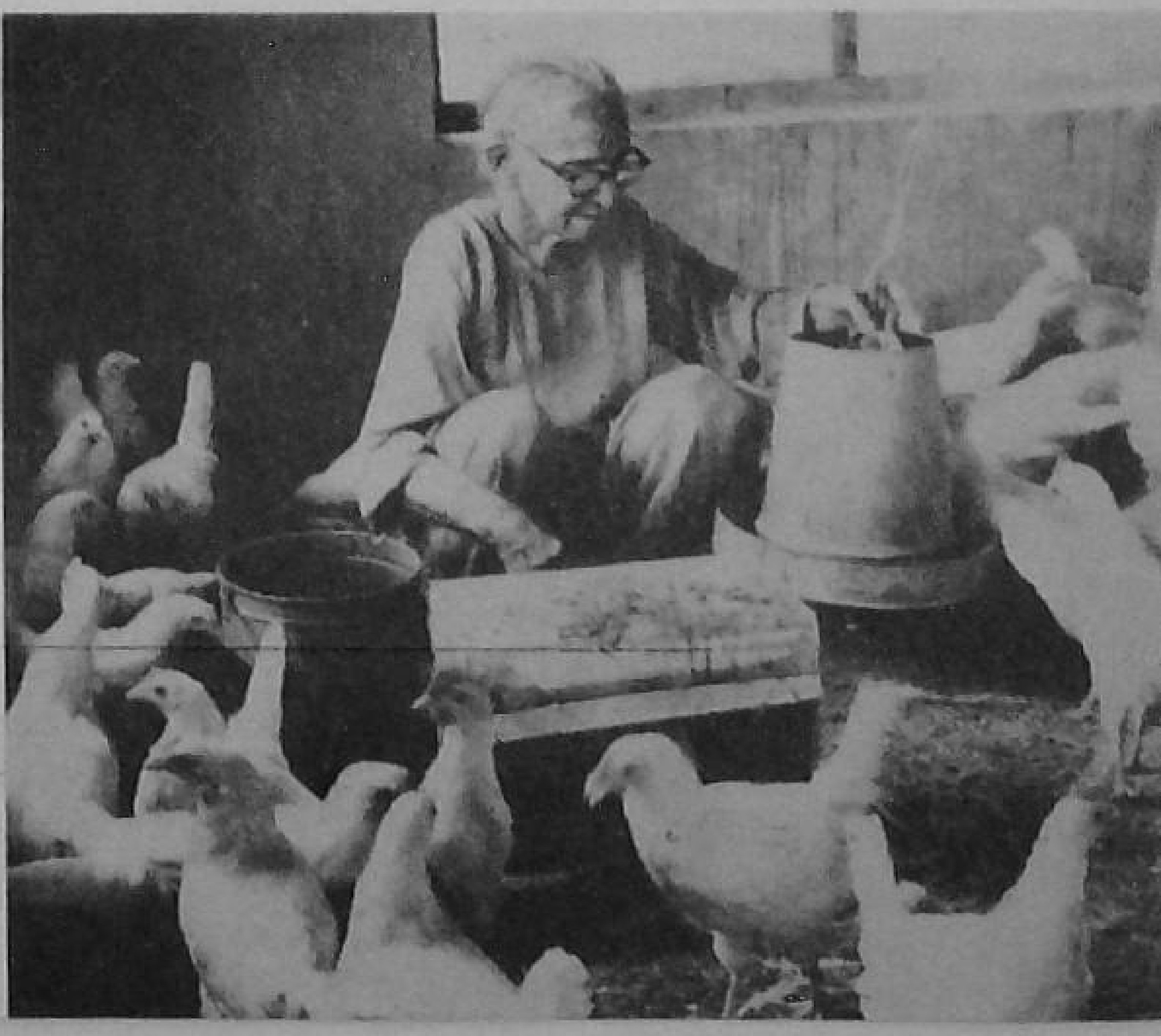
Principal, Shri Surjan Singh Gill, instructing Devinder Singh (extreme right), member of a youth club, how to prepare a water fountain from an earthen pitcher for use in the latter's poultry farm.

Mrs. Gupta tending her flock of birds that lays "vegetarian eggs".

POULTRY FARMING AT NILOKHERI

The trainees of the Orientation and Study Centre at Nilokheri are being taught how to prepare the feed for the birds.

Even an old lady can look after the birds at odd hours.



Modern Indian villages like Gharuwan in the Punjab are becoming sacred meeting places of the old and the new. In the picture above is a sanitary well in front with brick pavements all around. On the left is the new building of the Panchayat Ghar and the Service Co-operative and on the right, a temple and a gurdwara,—a Community Centre indeed !

Printed by the Manager, Government of India Press, Faridabad, and published by the Director, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi-6, on behalf of the Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation.

Regd. No. D—877.